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FROM: BERN
DATE OF INFO: 10 April 1945
DATE OF REPORT: 12 April 1945
EVALUATION: F-2
SOURCE: German official who deserted to
Switzerland February 1945 and is now
seeking our favors, via 441
COUNTRY: GERMANY
SUBJECT: Notes for the "Gallery of War Criminals" -
SS-Obersturmbannführer Wilhelm BEISSNER
DISTRIBUTION: Paris, Caserta, Washington, Files (3)

1. Wilhelm BEISSNER was Gestapo Chief in LODZ, Poland, and ~~ZAGREB~~, Croatia. He is one of the important Gestapo men whose mission was almost exclusively in various German-occupied countries. He is said to be one of the cruellest Gestapo officials, responsible for the death of a great many Jews in Poland, as well as a number of other victims in districts where he had been stationed.

2. Beissner is 35 years old, 1m80 tall, brunette, hair parted on the left-hand side, bad teeth, speaks with a slight lisp, looks much younger than his age. As a result of an accident, one of his hands (the informant was not sure which one) has very noticeable white spots, due to some acid having been spilled on it. Informant thought that almost half of his hand is covered with these spots.

3. Beissner has a diploma as "Volkswirt" (doctor of agronomy). Prior to the outbreak of the war, he was a "Referent" in the "Ausserpolitisches Amt" (an independent affiliation of the German Foreign Office) of which Rosenberg was the head. He was specialist for the Balkan states and had a great deal to do with the Iron Guard Putsch in Rumania. Simultaneously, he was SS-Hauptsturmführer (Captain) in Himmler's "Hauptamt" (head office).

4. At the outbreak of the war, he went to Poland and was made Chief of the Gestapo in LODZ where he was known for his cruelties and persecution of the Jews. After 3 or 4 months in this position, he returned to Germany and was promoted to Sturmbannführer (Major).

5. His next job was in the RSHA (Reichssicherheits-hauptamt - Himmler's organization), where he became the "Referent" for the Near East, including Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan. At the end of 1939 and beginning of 1940, he made several trips to these countries. Early in 1941, he was sent to Yugoslavia where he was very friendly with

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STOJADINOVITCH. After the occupation of Yugoslavia, he was appointed Gestapo Chief in ZAGREB where he distinguished himself with further cruelties and persecutions, simultaneously accumulating quite a fortune for himself.

6. In Zagreb, he had difficulties with the German Ambassador KASCHKE and at the latter's insistence was recalled to Berlin. Towards the end of 1941 we find him again in the RSHA, having a roving commission which included travels to Greece and later on to North Africa. In 1942 he was in North Africa with Rommel on a special mission for Gestapo, jointly with another member of the organization by name of WEGKE. Towards the end of 1943, beginning of 1944 he returned to Berlin and was promoted to Obersturmbannführer (Lt. Col.) At that time he was appointed the "referent" for Switzerland, travelling a great deal and remaining practically at no time in Germany. It is from outside of Germany that he directed his work in Switzerland. Our informant last saw him late in December 1944 and early in January 1945, in MILAN.

7. Beissner is married and has one child. He is on bad terms with his wife and they are now separated. Frau Beissner used to complain to our informant's wife how badly he treated his child, beating him constantly. He is vengeful and evidently possesses a number of other objectionable characteristics.

8. One of his friends in Berlin was Dr. DHAWAN, an Indian who has lived in Germany for the last 20 years having been condemned to death by the British. Dhawan is head of Indian propaganda in the Reichspropaganda-Ministerium. His Berlin address is Droysenstrasse 14. The Berlin address of Beissner can be found in the telephone book where he is the only man by this name spelling it with two "s".

jbw